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ABSTRACT

PROTEACH is a newly redesigned five-year preservice teacher preparation program at the University of Florida. During progress through the program, the bachelor's degree is obtained, and the program culminates on completion of the master's degree. Program features include emphasis on research and study in fields supplementary to education-related study. Reasons for changing to a five-year program include changes in the teaching profession and in teacher preparation, new demands placed on teachers, the need to prepare for increasingly complex teaching fields, changes in public perception of teachers' degrees, the need to work on and master effective classroom practices, and the need for more comprehensive and demanding requirements. This document discusses these trends and describes the PROTEACH programs for elementary school, secondary school, and special education teachers. (CB)

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PROTEACH:
An Extended Preservice Teacher Preparation Program

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I. Definition - Proteach is a short form name for a newly redesigned five-year preservice teacher preparation program at the University of Florida. During progress through the program the B. A. Degree is completed. The program culminates on completion of the masters' degree.

II. Why develop a five-year teacher preparation program?

A. Consider the evolution of a profession. Salary, social esteem and professional preparation are inextricably intertwined. One may consider professions such as pharmacy, civil engineering and law. The patterns of development in those fields may hold implications for education. It is worth noting that in each case increases in salary and social esteem have followed, and not preceded, increases in preparation. In the case of education, the duration of training has not increased and both salary and social esteem have declined as society and the expectations for schooling have increased.

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B. The general perception of the public with respect to the design and content of teacher preparation programs is badly distorted. Even so, there was, and continues to be, widespread disenchantment with teachers and the

SP 025 596

manner in which they are prepared.

C. It was recognized that fundamental change in teacher education had not taken place in fifty years and that while it is not flawed in design it is currently insufficient in scope. The current expectations of society are such that teachers viewed as competent must have more comprehensive mastery of their subject field and possess greater mastery of the ability to practice their craft.

D. We held the belief that the demands placed on teachers in the 21st century will require better prepared teachers. Since 1982, those individuals entering the teaching field who practice a full career will spend the majority of their professional life teaching in the 21st century. We are today, as we enter the information age, more a part of the future than is generally recognized.

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E. We recognized that teaching is more difficult and complex than it was fifty years ago. It is essential that teachers have at least minimal skills to take advantage of computer applications in the classroom, greater understanding of increasingly complex teaching fields and more sophisticated understanding of research related to the classroom which directly links teacher behavior with student performance.

F. We further recognized that a teacher with a

Bachelors' degree today does not represent an educated person in society as they did in the past. Today a college degree is required as a condition of employment for positions which not many years ago required no more than a high school diploma for entry. The requirements for entry into education are so minimal that it holds little distinction, certainly not what it did in the past. And what anyone can do few will value.

G. We concluded that much of the recent research on teaching and learning, especially the process-product research, reflects information essential for effective beginning teachers. This increasingly substantive and consistent body of research should comprise the central element of the teacher preparation programs of the future. Not only must prospective teachers demonstrate that they have acceptably mastery of this content but they must have the benefit of increasingly sophisticated clinical practice during their preparation. They must have the opportunity to practice and master effective classroom practices.

H. We also concluded that advances in nearly all fields required that teachers be more fully prepared in their teaching fields. The burgeoning rate at which knowledge is being generated is well known. It is essential that teachers possess knowledge in their teaching fields a level well beyond that of their most able students. The next generation of teacher preparation programs must have

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more comprehensive and demanding requirements for study in the teaching field and in disciplines outside the colleges of education which undergird effective educational practice.

III. Proteach is a five-year preservice teacher preparation program culminating in the acquisition of a masters' degree. However, there are three distinct programs within Proteach; one for the preparation of elementary teachers, one for the preparation of secondary teachers and one for the preparation of special education teachers. There are some aspects of Proteach which are common to all programs.

A. The program for the preparation of elementary teachers will have expanded requirements for study outside the College of Education. Students must take from 42 to to 54 hours outside education beyond their 39 hour general education requirement.

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The program for the preparation of elementary teachers also requires that the student must take two blocks of study in teaching fields appropriate to the elementary school. These areas include such areas as english, social studies, mathematics, science special education and reading. At least one of the two areas of concentration must be in arts and sciences.

There is concern that elementary teachers do not have a sufficient grasp of scientific knowledge and that they

are not sufficiently comfortable with that discipline in the classroom. Consequently, students preparing to become elementary teachers must take at least two laboratory science courses, one in the physical sciences and one in the biological sciences.

Students preparing to become elementary teachers must take a course in statistics in the Statistics Department. The purpose of that requirement is to insure that students taking tests and measurement have the background in statistics necessary to master the content of the course. It is also felt that the acquisition of this information will make it possible for elementary teachers to have a better understanding of tests utilized in schools and be better able to interpret test results to parents and students.

B. The program for the preparation of secondary teachers will require that the undergraduate degree be earned in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in those fields represented in that College. The consequence of this requirement is that secondary teachers will have to be admissible in their teaching field in arts and sciences and meet all of the requirements for graduation from that college. From the perspective of the College of Education it is desirable that students choose their major and minors carefully so that they will be qualified to teach in more than one field consistent with the nature of teaching assignments in the secondary school.

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It is possible for students to elect a maximum of 15 hours of study in education within their undergraduate program; then they are required to complete 9 hours of study in their teaching field within their graduate program. In this manner it is possible to develop a five-year integrated teacher preparation program rather than what is conventionally referred to as a four-plus-one year program.

In meeting the requirements for graduation in that College students will have to have taken two years of study in a foreign language. The College of Education holds the view that this requirement is desirable for individuals entering teaching.

C. The program for the preparation of special education teachers will also have expanded requirements for study in the liberal arts and sciences.

It will also make it possible for graduates from the program to meet the requirements for certification in two fields of special education.

D. Proteach has some elements that are common among all programs.

There is a common emphasis on research, especially that body of knowledge associated with the research on which

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the Florida Perfcrmance Measurement System is based. The faculty spent a great period of time, nearly a year, reviewing the knowledge base appropriate to beginning teachers. The emphasis has been placed on the process-product and teacher effectiveness research which directly relates teacher behaviors with student performance.

In each of the programs there is greater emphasis placed on study in the supporting areas in the various teaching fields in arts and sciences. It is interesting to note that the proportion of study within the College of Education and outside the College of Education has changed little with the acquisition of a fifth year of study. That is, about three-fourths of the additional year for secondary teachers will be taught outside the College of Education. In the case of the preparation of elementary teachers, about half of the additional year will be taught outside the College of Education. In the case of special education, slightly less than half of the additional year of study will be taught outside the College of Education.

There is a pre-education component in each of the programs in Proteach. The pre-professional component specifies study in arts and sciences which provides important background information for study in education including such areas as urban sociology, the family, social psychology and cultural anthropology.

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A micro-computer applications to education course is included in all programs. With the rapidly expanding role of the computer in education it is essential that all teachers, regardless of level or teaching field, be computer literate. It is obvious that the computer is a teaching tool of increasing power and significance.

F. In the development of the Proteach program it was necessary and desirable to look at requirements for admission to the College of Education. Since Proteach is essentially a graduate program it is not surprising that the admission requirements were raised.

The SAT entrance requirement has been raised from 835 to 850. The GPA requirement has been raised from 2.5 to 2.6. This increase was made in anticipation of the requirements necessary for admission to the Graduate School.

Enrollments in the College of Education this Fall have been encouraging. Enrollment has increased slightly. No large declines have been evident. In view of the higher requirements for admission and an additional year of preparation for entry into the profession it is not unreasonable to expect lean years for a time until five year preparation programs become more widely adopted.

G. An evaluation committee has been at work for over a

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year. An effort has been made to collect baseline data to make it possible to better evaluate the success of Proteach. If our graduates perform more effectively we will be pleased. If they do not we have an obligation to report that finding also and to reconsider our effort.

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H. Funding for the development of Proteach has not been easy. We have had no external support, no additional funding from the State for program development, and no special allocation from the University, but we have been permitted to use our discretionary monies for that purpose. And we have done so.

IV. The processes followed in the design and implementation of Proteach took place over a period of more than four years. It is a tribute to the faculty that the College was able to maintain its energy and focus on a single activity for such a long time without losing interest or being diverted to other tasks. Simply let me report that the effort required great commitment from many people and an incredible amount of time. I would estimate, conservatively I think, that fully three-fourths of the faculty were directly involved in the development and implementation of Proteach at one time or another in the process.

The College of Education is deeply indebted to many individuals outside the College of Education who assisted in the development and implementation of Proteach: faculty and deans from the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Fine Arts, the College of Agriculture and the College of Health, Physical

Education and Recreation; representatives from the Florida Education Association, the Florida Teaching Profession / NEA, the Florida Association of School Administrators, the Florida State Department of Education and classroom teachers and school administrators from throughout the State.

V. It is essential that the programs for the preparation of teachers entering the profession in this nation be increased in quality and comprehensiveness. Recognition that preservice teacher preparation programs sufficient to meet the rigorous expectations of the 21st century cannot be accomplished during four years is becoming increasingly accepted.

It will not be so bad if we have tried and failed because we are better for having make the effort; it would have been inexcusable if we had not tried.

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